

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 120988
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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, KS, US

SUBJECT: GENERAL SINGLAUB'S TESTIMONY BEFORE HOUSE ARMED
SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE

1. MAJOR GENERAL SINGLAUB APPEARED MAY 24 BEFORE SUB-
COMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS OF HOUSE ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE TO TESTIFY ON TROOP WITHDRAWAL DECISION.
APPEARANCE WAS AT REQUEST OF SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN.

2. ACCORDING DEPARTMENT OFFICERS ATTENDING, MAJOR FOCUS
OF QUESTIONS WAS WHETHER U.S. COMMAND IN KOREA HAD BEEN
CONSULTED ON DESIRABILITY OF TROOP WITHDRAWAL IN ADVANCE
OF DECISION, AND WHETHER FIELD HAD RECEIVED RATIONALE FOR
TROOP WITHDRAWAL. GENERAL SINGLAUB SAID COMMAND ONLY
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CONSULTED ON WITHDRAWAL OPTIONS AND HE KNEW OF NO SENIOR
U.S. OFFICIAL IN KOREA INCLUDING THOSE IN EMBASSY WHO
AGREED WITH WITHDRAWAL ON PRESIDENTIAL SCHEDULE. GENERAL
ALSO SAID USFK HAD REQUESTED RATIONALE FOR ACTION FROM
JCS BUT HAD NOT RECEIVED ANSWER OR ANY STATEMENT OF
BENEFITS EXPECTED FROM WITHDRAWAL. SINGLAUB SAID USFK
HAD TRIED TO CONVEY ADVERSE EFFECTS OF ACTION IN ITS

COMMENTS ON WITHDRAWAL OPTIONS FURNISHED IT.

3. SINGLAUB DENIED HE HAD SAID PRESIDENTIAL DECISION BASED

ON INCOMPLETE INFORMATION AND SAID HE PRESUMED DECISION BASED ON OVERRIDING NON-MILITARY FACTORS OF WHICH HE NOT AWARE. GENERAL OFFERED OPINION THAT TROOPS SHOULD BE USED AS BARGAINING CHIP AND NOT WITHDRAWN UNLESS THERE WERE SOME QUID PRO QUO FROM NORTH KOREA.

4. SINGLAUB ATTRIBUTED HIS VIEWS AND THAT OF OTHERS IN KOREA TO REVISED INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES WHICH HE SAID WERE UNDERTAKEN OVER PAST TWO YEARS AND CONTAINED IN PRM. HE SAID FIVE-YEAR WITHDRAWAL TIMETABLE INCOMPATIBLE WITH SECURITY OF THE ROK, AND WHILE EIGHT-YEAR PERIOD IN WHICH FIP EQUIPMENT WOULD BE DELIVERED WOULD BRING ROK UP TO HIGHER LEVEL, THERE WOULD STILL NOT BE A BALANCE WITH NORTH KOREA SINCE FIP DEVELOPED ON ASSUMPTION SECOND DIVISION WOULD REMAIN IN ROK.

5. BELOW IS FULL TEXT OF SINGLAUB'S OPENING STATEMENT:

QUOTE MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE

I AM PLEASED TO RESPOND TO YOUR REQUEST THAT I APPEAR BEFORE THIS SUBCOMMITTEE TO DISCUSS THE DEFENSE POSTURE IN KOREA.

AT THE OUTSET I WANT TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT I AM IN NO WAY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AT ODDS WITH THE CONCEPT OF CIVILIAN CONTROL OF THE MILITARY AND I KNOW OF NO OFFICER WHO IS. LIKE ALL PROFESSIONAL OFFICERS, I HAVE DEDICATED MY LIFE TO THE PRESERVATION OF OUR CONSTITUTION AND TO CARRYING OUT THE ORDERS AND DIRECTIVES OF MY SUPERIORS. IT WAS NOT MY INTENT IN THE INCIDENT WHICH HAS RESULTED IN MY REASSIGNMENT TO OPERATE OUTSIDE THE CHAIN OF COMMAND, TO APPEAL DIRECTLY TO THE PUBLIC THROUGH THE PRESS, OR TO CRITICIZE A DECISION OF MY COMMANDER IN CHIEF. IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN MY BELIEF AND IT IS MY BELIEF NOW THAT I WILL CARRY OUT ANY DECISION MADE BY MY SUPERIORS REGARDLESS OF HOW HARD I HAD PREVIOUSLY ARGUED AGAINST THAT DECISION.

IN THE INCIDENT WHICH HAS LED TO THIS UNWANTED PUBLICITY AND MY ULTIMATE RELIEF FROM ASSIGNMENT IN KOREA I WAS UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT I WAS SPEAKING ON BACKGROUND TO HELP A REPORTER UNDERSTAND THE KEY ISSUES TO BE FACED BY THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE U.S.-KOREAN NEGOTIATIONS WHICH ARE TAKING PLACE AT THIS TIME. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, I

WAS UNDOUBTEDLY LESS GUARDED IN THE CHOICE OF WORDS AND THE USE OF CAVEATS THAN I WOULD HAVE BEEN IF I HAD EXPECTED ATTRIBUTION.

THE QUESTION I ANSWERED WHICH RESULTED IN MY BEING HERE TODAY WAS WORDED ABOUT LIKE THIS: DO YOU THINK THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S PLAN TO WITHDRAW ALL GROUND FORCES FROM KOREA IS LIKELY TO ENCOURAGE KIM IL-SUNG AND LEAD TO WAR?

MY RESPONSE WAS THAT SENIOR ROK OFFICERS WOULD GIVE A VERY DEFINITE YES TO THAT QUESTION AND THAT, FROM THE PURELY MILITARY POINT OF VIEW, I AGREE WITH THEM. I WENT ON TO POINT OUT, HOWEVER, THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAS MANY OTHER FACTORS TO CONSIDER, AND SINCE HE HAS AVAILABLE TO HIM THE SAME MILITARY INTELLIGENCE WE HAVE IN KOREA, I ASSUME THAT OTHER NON-MILITARY FACTORS ARE OVERRIDING. I TOLD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE REPORTER THAT WHEN FINAL WITHDRAWAL PLANS WERE MADE WE WOULD EXECUTE THEM WITH ENTHUSIASM AND A HIGH LEVEL OF PROFESSIONALISM.

I SINCERELY REGRET THAT MY NAIVENESS ABOUT PRESS RELATIONS HAS GENERATED THIS SITUATION AND HAS OBVIOUSLY AND JUSTIFIABLY DISTRESSED OUR PRESIDENT. I REALIZE THAT SOME WILL BELIEVE THAT REGARDLESS OF WHETHER I THOUGHT THAT MY REMARKS WERE FOR NON-ATTRIBUTION, MY AIM WAS STILL THE SAME--TO TAKE ISSUE WITH OUR COUNTRY'S STATED NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY. HOWEVER, I CAN STATE CATEGORICALLY THAT SUCH WAS NOT MY INTENT.

THE UNITED NATIONS COMMAND AND U.S. FORCES KOREAN COMMAND IN WHICH I SERVED AS CHIEF OF STAFF ACCEPT AND SUPPORT THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION TO WITHDRAW GROUND COMBAT FORCES FROM KOREA.

THE ADMINISTRATION HAS STATED THAT THIS WITHDRAWAL WILL BE HANDLED IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH THE CONTINUED SECURITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND ONLY AFTER CLOSE CONSULTATIONS WITH THE ROK AND JAPANESE GOVERNMENTS. THESE CONSULTATIONS ARE ONGOING AT THIS MOMENT. OUR PRIMARY OBJECTIVES WILL REMAIN THE MAINTENANCE OF PEACE ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA. TO PROVIDE A VIABLE DEMONSTRATION OF THIS COMMITMENT, THE U.S. WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE THE ROK WITH LOGISTIC, AIR, AND NAVAL SUPPORT.

I REITERATE THAT AS A PROFESSIONAL OFFICER I SUPPORT THIS POLICY AND I HOPE THAT THE MEMBERS OF THIS SUBCOMMITTEE

WILL KEEP THIS IN MIND AS I ANSWER THEIR QUESTIONS.

THANK YOU, MR. CHAIRMAN. UNQUOTE VANCE

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